

AWARDS OF OFFICIAL REFEREES.

WOOD BOND AND PLATES.

The district-surveyor of Greenwich laid an information against William Heath, of Charles-street, Horsleydown, for having placed wood bond and plates into the external walls of two dwelling houses in Blackheath-road, "in such lengths as to render the parts of the walls above wholly, or in great part, dependant upon the wood for support, contrary to Schedule D, part 3, of the Act, and also contrary to an award of the official referees, made upon a requisition from Oldfield and Baker, D.S., dated May, 1846."

At the hearing "it appeared, that the building in question contains four stories, and that there are two tiers of continuous wood bond, 4 inches by 3 inches, in the external walls in the second and third stories, the walls being 14 inches in thickness, without recesses, except at the staircase; and Mr. Badger, on the part of Mr. Heath, contended that bond timber thus laid in walls, did not render the walls in great part dependant upon the wood for support, and might be withdrawn without endangering the safety of the superincumbent structure, and therefore, was not contrary to the Metropolitan Buildings Act; and further, that it was not contrary to the award referred to by the district-surveyor in his said information."

The referees awarded: "That timber, laid continuously as bond or plates, or otherwise, in a 1½ brick or 14-inch wall, flush with either face of the wall, or so that it have not at least 4 inches of brick or stonework on each of its sides, does render the part of the wall above it in great part dependant upon the wood for support; and that the withdrawal of any such wood would endanger the safety of the superincumbent structure within the meaning of the Metropolitan Buildings Act. And inasmuch as the walls in question are of such thickness of 14 inches, and the bond timber and plates in question are laid continuously flush with the inside faces of the said walls, the parts of the walls above such bond and plates are in great part dependant upon the wood for support; and inasmuch, moreover, as such timber might not be withdrawn without endangering the safety of the superincumbent structure, the bond and plates in question in external walls, and in continuous lengths, are contrary, in this respect, to the Metropolitan Buildings Act; and we do hereby direct the said William Heath forthwith to remove from the said walls, and to replace with brickwork, all bond and plates of timber so laid contrary to the said Act, or so much thereof that there be in every pier of the said walls, a part equal in length upon the face of the wall to the thickness of the wall, wholly of brickwork, and without any timber therein from the foundations of such walls up to the underside of the plates under the roof, or in default of such removal, to pull down to the level of the bed of the lower tier of such bond and plates, all and every such walls as may have been so irregularly built as aforesaid."

THE ARCHEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE OF ROME.

—The anniversary of the foundation of Rome has been celebrated this year in an especial manner by the above society, which truly thought, that only under a really liberal government, the knowledge of antiquity can prosper. If, on the other hand, the number of excavations has decreased of late, the wish of making fully known what exists has greatly increased. The transactions of the Archaeological Institute, up to 1846, are now completed; and the continuation will appear conjointly at Rome and Paris.—Cavaliere Canina laid before the society his work on the antiquities of *Vesii*,—once the rival of Rome, whose ruins are not considerable, still sufficient for fixing the locality, and appreciating the importance of this old city. Dr. Braun made a report on the excavations on the western slope of the Palatine hill, executed by order of the emperor of Russia, and spoke of the discovery of a new square, adjoining the church of St. Theodore, towards the forum, whose Travertine pavement lies in the same direction and on the same level with that near the Phœnix column. The results of the excavations of Commandante Campane, near Care, proved very important. Vases have been discovered, which nearly attain the beauty and elegant style of those of Vulci.

THE BUILDERS' BENEVOLENT INSTITUTION.

On Monday, the 19th, as was briefly mentioned last week, a general meeting in promotion of the Builders' Benevolent Institution, will be held in the Freemasons' Tavern at one o'clock. The object is to establish a relief fund, to be applied for the service of subscribers' workmen, and to erect an asylum for the reception of decayed masters, their wives and widows. The advantages of the institution are to be entirely confined to those connected with the building trades, viz:—bricklayers, plasterers, slaters, plumbers, carpenters, joiners, masons, painters, glaziers, smiths, and paper-hangers.

We have been blamed by some of our readers for not sooner urging the advantages of this proposed association; a little consideration, however, will surely convince them, that if we advanced projects submitted to us without full and satisfactory inquiry, the opinion of *THE BUILDER* would soon be worth nothing. Now that we have made this inquiry, and find amongst those engaged in the formation of the society, Mr. Biers, Mr. Stephen Bird, Mr. George Bird (treasurer), Mr. William Gubitt, Mr. Nesham, and other respectable men, we are able, conscientiously, to call upon all persons connected with the building trades to give it their warmest support. Although, in influence to-day, they may support it on purely philanthropic grounds, should to-morrow bring a reverse, they may find personally the advantage of their former good deeds. To Mr. Thomas Cozens, of Lisson Grove, the projector of the Institution, considerable praise is due for much exertion in furtherance of it.

COLLEGE FOR CIVIL ENGINEERS AT PUTNEY.

On Monday, the 12th, there was a numerous assemblage of visitors in the hall of the College to witness the annual distribution of prizes. The Duke of Buccleuch presided, and was supported by the Earl of Devon, and others. The Rev. Morgan Cowie, the principal, in the course of his report (to which we may, perhaps, refer again at greater length), alluded to the increased stability of the Institution, and the importance of its objects to the great interests of the country, in providing for the development of the various enterprises which are daily being started—railways, harbours, navigation improvements, improvements in the mode of building, cleansing, ventilating, and watering of towns—operations which required enormous capital and skilful management, and the assistance of hundreds of heads and millions of hands. He observed also on the importance of science as a guide and auxiliary of the merely practical branches of engineering, ascribing the number of recent failures in bridges, &c., to the neglect of that portion of their art by a large number of engineers, who, he believed, did not know the laws that regulated the results they witnessed in the course of their professional experience, and who, therefore, were apt to generalise falsely in their opinions, and apply to particular instances their general rule, without discriminating sufficiently between the data. He considered it a matter for serious consideration by her Majesty's Government, whether or not engineers, to whom is now entrusted the lives and property of her subjects, should be allowed to exercise their valuable and important profession without some guarantee to the public of their competency.

Reports by Professor Davies (geometry), Dr. Lyon Playfair (chemistry), Professor Ansted (geology), Mr. Hodgkinson (geodesy), and others, were read, shewing satisfactory progress on the part of the students, and setting forth their own views as to the future.

Mr. Ranger, the professor of civil engineering and architecture, suggested in his report, that when Government inquiries into the causes of failures be made, the facts and particulars should be transmitted to the college for consideration. He alluded with great satisfaction to some essays "On Building Stones," which had been submitted by the students in competition.

The following is a list of the prizemen:—

Mathematics: Class 1, Porter and Simpson; Class 2, Coghlan and Oakes; Class 3, Campbell and Briscoe.—*Chemistry*: Class 1, Crump; Class 2, Thompson.—*Geology*: Porter.—*Geodesy*: Class 1,

King; Class 2, Christie and Matheu; Class 3, Arvide; Class of Military Surveying, Heycock.—*Civil Engineering*: Class 1, King; Class 2, Ackland; Class 3, Cato and Kershaw.—*Architecture*: Class 1, Clarke; Class 2, Bennett; Class 3, Cato.—*Machinery*: Class 1, Batley and Cook—*Drawings*: Class 2, Coghlan—*Drawings*: Coghlan; Class 3, Campbell—*Drawings*, Campbell; *Manipulation*, Baldwin.—*Free-hand Drawing*: Christie.—*Linear Perspective*: Campbell.—*French*: Class 1, Porter; Class 2, Robertson.—*German*: Class 1, Calvert; Class 2, Whicshell.—*Essay on Coal-Workings*, &c.: Codrington.—*Essay on Building Stones*: King.

Many others received honourable mention.

The workshops were then visited, and the drawings of the students inspected.

A long range of additional chambers and studies has been recently erected, under the direction of Mr. Little.

ST. ALBAN'S ARCHITECTURAL SOCIETY.

On the 17th instant the second anniversary of the St. Alban's Architectural Society was held in the town-hall, the Earl of Verulam in the chair. The report of the council having been read, which stated that a general meeting of the Society will be held in Hertford on the 11th of August next, the Rev. C. B. Pearson read a paper on the late restoration of nine parish churches in the northern part of the county, detailing the manner in which the works had been carried on.

Dr. Bromet drew the attention of the meeting to the use of common varnish, for the refreshing of decaying frescoes, and of its assistance in deciphering obscure inscriptions. He also exhibited a fac-simile of an inscription in an unknown character recently discovered in the tomb of a knight-Templar, and dwelt strongly on the propriety of copying and so preserving all inscriptions, however ancient their character, or obsolete their language, alleging, that although now unintelligible, a key might one day be found which would unlock their whole mystery, and lay open to us knowledge hitherto untought of.

Professor Donaldson read a paper on "Basilicas, the early Christian churches of the Roman empire."

Mr. Boutell read a paper written by Mr. Laing, jun., on the principles of Norman architecture, the author of the paper at the same time elucidating the subject by referring to a series of drawings which adorned the walls.

Mr. Chambers, in seconding a resolution, said:—"We did not pry into antiquity to be buried beneath its dust. No, we explored its traces, we investigated its remains that we might imbibe its spirit, that we might appropriate, and apply to the more useful and practical mind of the present day, all that we there found of graceful and noble, thus refining, adorning, and elevating an age, which, but for that, might be degraded into the sordid and self-seeking. There was in the mind of man a natural feeling of reverence for what was ancient. We looked with interest at an old tree, or an old stone, merely because we knew it had stood in its place for centuries. An old house was an object of increased interest, as it awakened thoughts of the domestic life of our ancestors; a building dedicated to civil purposes, to the administration of the laws, to the furtherance of the ends of justice, demanded a yet higher degree of regard; but one consecrated to sacred purposes, where man had met his fellow man, to worship together their common Creator, exacted our highest respect and sympathy."

NEW ITALIAN OPERA HOUSE, COVENT GARDEN.

The production of "Anna Bolina" at the new house (a noble performance) is distinguished by some capital scenery by Griere, worthy of note, particularly the interior of a gorgeous Tudor hall, which is excellently well painted. If the main arches were the obliquely pointed instead of semi-circular, we should be without an objection. The scenery is some of the recent *Divertissements*, and the artistical groupings, call for praise.

In respect of sound, in this building, Mr. Albano's arrangements have been most successful, every note is heard, pure and distinct.